

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



*United States Attorney Donald W. Washington
Western District of Louisiana*

United States Courthouse • 300 Fannin Street, Suite 3201 • Shreveport, Louisiana 71101-3068 • (318) 676-3600
United States Courthouse • 800 Lafayette Street, Suite 2200 • Lafayette, Louisiana 70501-7206 • (337) 262-6618

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Contact: Donald W. Washington (337-262-6618)

William J. Flanagan (318-676-3600)

FORMER CAPTAIN AT PINE PRAIRIE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY FINDS HIMSELF ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE LAW

*Former prison captain gets 32 months in prison for
civil rights violation & tampering with witnesses*

Lafayette, Louisiana . . . United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announces that **GILBERT SELF**, age 51, from Florine, Louisiana, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Richard T. Haik to 32 months imprisonment to be followed by 2 years supervised release for civil rights violation and tampering with witnesses. SELF was tried by a jury in February of this year in federal court. After listening to evidence for three days, the jury deliberated for 45 minutes before delivering a guilty verdict on one count of civil rights violation and three counts of tampering with witnesses.

A report was filed by the Pine Prairie Correctional Center in July 2003 alleging SELF's use of excessive force on an immigration detainee. Immigration detainees are not inmates serving jail time, but housed at certain facilities awaiting administrative action by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Based on an investigation conducted by the United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, the United

States Department of Homeland Security, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, SELF was indicted in April 2004.

The indictment alleged that the incident occurred on July 26, 2003 after the victim allegedly made crude remarks to a female detention officer, who was one of SELF's colleagues at the facility. The detention officer reported the incident to SELF, who was a high ranking officer at the facility at that time. SELF, instead of following appropriate disciplinary procedures, entered the cell, threw the detainee against the wall, and began to scuffle with him.

Three other officers at the facility arrived on the scene and assisted in subduing the detainee. However, after the detainee was completely restrained and lying face down on the floor, SELF punched the victim's face repeatedly, slammed his head onto the floor and kicked the victim in the ribs. The officers repeatedly instructed SELF to stop, but SELF ignored their pleas. After the officers were able to remove SELF from the cell, the officers brought the victim to the facility nurse for medical assistance. The victim suffered serious bodily injury, including bruising and swelling to both eyes, a cut on his eye, injury to his left ear and ribs, and temporary loss of consciousness.

After the beating, SELF met with the three other officers and the on-call facility nurse following the incident and instructed the officers to prepare false reports favoring SELF. SELF advised the officers that Immigration authorities would likely get involved, and if he went down they [the officers] were also going down. Initially, the officer prepared false reports as instructed by SELF. However, one of the officers reported the incident indicating SELF's involvement to SELF's supervisor the following day, which resulted in the investigation and subsequent charges and trial.

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley and Assistant Michael Khoury, U.S. Department of Justice Civil Right Division.

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